

# Hunter Mill Road Area Special Study

## Preliminary Report of Existing Conditions

### **Existing Land Use and Zoning**

#### Subject Area

The Hunter Mill Road Special Study Area consists of about 305 acres, excluding roads. The approximate acreage of the land uses in the Study Area is as follows:

- Residential – 75.8 acres – All single-family detached units. Of the 37 single family homes within the area, 31 are in the Equestrian Park subdivision. The houses are developed on lots ranging from 1.2 to 8 acres, with an average lot size of approximately 2 acres. A large portion of the residential area, known as the Bachman Farm, is a 116-acre site that is undeveloped but approved and subdivided for 52 single family detached houses.
- Institutional – 31.8 acres – Two private schools, Fairfax Christian School and the Edlin School (approved as a special exception uses) and Reston Presbyterian Church approved as a special permit use are west of Hunter Mill Road, north of Sunset Hills Road.
- Public Uses – 13.4 acres – A Virginia Department of Transportation Maintenance Yard is located south of Sunset Hills Road. Right of Way acquired for the realignment of Sunset Hills Road adjacent to Equestrian Park is also included.
- Private Recreation – 48 acres. The Golf Park at Hunter Mill is located east of Hunter Mill Road, north of Sunset Hills Road.
- Vacant – 136 acres. Approximately 44 percent of the area is currently undeveloped or vacant. Vacant properties include the Bachman Farm as well as several scattered lots.

The entire area is zoned Residential Estate (R-E), with a maximum density of one dwelling unit per two acres. If the area were developed entirely as residential lots of two acres, 157 single family houses could be built. Under the current R-E zoning, the undeveloped Bachman property and the Thoburn golf range could result in 82 houses.

#### Surrounding area

North:

West of Hunter Mill Road: Lake Fairfax Park – planned for public park and zoned R-E.

East of Hunter Mill Road, north of Crowell Road – Neighborhoods of single family detached houses planned for residential use at .2 - .5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and zoned R-E.

West:

Lake Fairfax Business Park - A mix of office, research and development, and industrial flex uses zoned I-3 and I-4. A stream valley buffer exists between the office park and the Equestrian Park subdivision. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes this area as the boundary between the industrial and residential use. South of Sunset Hills Road adjacent to the maintenance facility are two parcels that are currently vacant but are zoned Planned Development Commercial (PDC).

East:

East of Golf Park – Victoria Farms area: single family detached houses planned for residential use at .2 - .5 du/ac and zoned R-E.

South (South of the Dulles Toll Road):

West of Hunter Mill Road – Reston Gateway at Parkridge: an office development zoned I-3 and planned for office use up to .35 FAR.

East of Hunter Mill Road – Hunter Mill Estates: a residential subdivision of 1 acre lots zoned R-1 and planned for residential use at .5-1 du/ac.

## **Comprehensive Plan**

### Land Use

The Concept for Future Development designates this area as a Low Density Residential Area, with residential use at .1-.5 du/ac. In general, non-residential uses are not encouraged, but in some instances may be appropriate at 0.05 - 0.1 FAR.

The Comprehensive Plan guidance for the study area is found in the Hickory and Reston Community Planning Sectors (UP3 and UP5) of the Upper Potomac Planning District, Area III volume. The area is planned for .2 - .5 du/ac. As an option, the Plan states that the area northwest of the intersection of Hunter Mill Road and Sunset Hills Road may also be appropriate for institutional or public uses. Uses requiring special permits or special exception approval should be rigorously reviewed and permitted only when the use is of a size and scale that will not adversely impact the adjacent uses.

### Transportation

Adjacent to the study area, Hunter Mill Road, Sunset Hills Road, and Crowell Road are two lane paved roads. The off- and on- ramps from west-bound Dulles Toll Road are also adjacent to the southern border of the study area. There are traffic lights at the intersection of Hunter Mill Road and Sunset Hills Road and where Hunter Mill Road and the off-ramp of west-bound Dulles Toll Road intersect.

Realignment and widening of Sunset Hills Road is recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. The current preferred option (Option A) for the realignment is to move the intersection with Hunter Mill Road opposite the Dulles Toll Road westbound off-ramp. The westbound on-ramp to the Toll Road would also be relocated to begin at Sunset Hills Road west of Hunter Mill Road and east of the existing VDOT maintenance facility. Option B recommends relocating Sunset Hills Road to intersect with Hunter Mill Road as close as possible to the Reston Presbyterian Church. Additional Plan guidance recommends that improvements to Sunset Hills Road should not adversely impact the operations of the private school located at 10742 Sunset Hills Road. The Transportation Plan Map shows Sunset Hills Road is planned to be widened to four lanes.

#### Heritage Resources

As noted in the Comprehensive Plan:

“There are known and potential heritage resources located along the 7.2 mile length of Hunter Mill Road, a portion of which lies within this Planning Sector. Such resources include sites or structures that are evidence of Native American occupation, pre-Revolutionary and Civil War activities, and the County’s agrarian past. Actions to document these heritage resources, and to protect and preserve those that are determined by the County to be of historic or archaeological significance, should be encouraged.”

There are no specific sites along Hunter Mill Road listed in the Inventory of Historic Sites of the Upper Potomac Planning District. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources determined the Hunter Mill Road corridor eligible for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places in 2001. In addition, Hunter Mill Road was designated a Virginia Byway in 2002 by the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Additional information on heritage resources, process for being listed on National, Virginia, and Fairfax County lists of historic resources, and the Virginia Byway designation can be found in the Preliminary Staff Report for 2004 APR Items 04-II-2F, 04-II-2V, 04-II-6V, 04-III-1UP, and 04-III-6UP.

#### **Public Facilities**

The study area is within the county water and sewer service areas.

#### Schools

The study area is served by Wolftrap Elementary, Thoreau Middle School, and Madison High School. As shown in the table below, Wolftrap Elementary has 626 students enrolled in 2005 and a capacity of 537 students. Thoreau Middle School has a current enrollment of 660 and a capacity of 725 students. Madison High School has 1811 students enrolled and a capacity of 1875 students.

SCHOOL	CAPACITY*	2004-05 Memb.*	Memb/Cap Difference 2004-05	2008-09 Memb.*	Memb/Cap Difference 2008-09
Wolftrap (K-6)	537	626	-89	692	-155
Thoreau (7-8)	725	660	65	651	74
Madison (9-12)	1875	1811	64	1579	296

\* Source: Fairfax County Public Schools, FY 2004 – FY 2008 Facilities Planning Services Office Enrollment Projections

### Parks

The Hunter Mill Road study area is located adjacent to Lake Fairfax Park and in close proximity to Colvin Run Stream Valley Park. These two parks provide a variety of recreational opportunities to area residents. Lake Fairfax Park, designated a Countywide Park, provides access to unique recreational facilities such as the Water Mine and the lake as well as rectangle fields and adult softball fields. Colvin Run is a Resource-Based Park and provides passive recreational opportunities.

This area is not well served by Local Parks. Local parks serve as lower intensity sites for short visit use. The nearest local park, Lexington Estates is over 2.5 miles from the study site. The study site does not fall within the service area of any youth or adult baseball fields, youth softball fields, RECenters, or indoor gyms.

### Trails

The [Countywide Trails Plan Map](#) indicates several planned trails in the study area. Along Crowell Road a major paved trail of 8 feet or more is planned. A trail within the Major Regional Trail System is planned along Dulles Toll Road. Along Hunter Mill Road, bike lanes are planned for both sides of the road. In addition, a minor paved trail with a parallel natural surface trail is planned along Hunter Mill Road.

### **Watershed**

The study area is within the Difficult Run watershed. The 2001 Fairfax County Stream Protection Strategy Baseline Study classifies this area as a Watershed Restoration Level II. The primary goal for this category is to, “Maintain areas to prevent further degradation and implement measures to improve water quality to support or comply with Chesapeake Bay Initiatives, Total Maximum Daily Load (TDML) regulations and other water quality initiatives and standards.”

The Fairfax County Physical Stream Assessment (published in 2004) rates this watershed as having fair quality (on a scale ranging from very poor to excellent). In addition, the study found a total of 1814 ‘inventory points’ (deficient buffers, crossings, ditches and pipes, erosion, head cuts, obstruction, and utilities) in Difficult Run.

### **Maps**

The following is a list of maps that will be available online, [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/huntermill](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/huntermill), in PDF format after July 25, 2005:

- Current Comprehensive Plan Map designation for surrounding area
- Current Zoning
- Existing Land Use
- Public Facilities: Water and Sewer lines
- Topography
- Aerial Photograph of the Surrounding Area

### **For Further Reading**

The following resources are available if you are in need of further information:

- **Park Authority Needs Assessment**,  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/needsassessment.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/needsassessment.htm)
- **Policy Plan volume of the Comprehensive Plan**,  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/).
- **Countywide Stream Physical Assessment Project**, Updated reports of the Countywide Stream Assessment may be requested by contacting the [Stormwater Planning Division](#), 703-324-5500, TTY 771.
- **Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance**,  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoningordinance/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoningordinance/).